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AN APPEAL  
FOR  
ESTABLISHING A MISSIONARY COLLEGE  
IN CHINA.

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## MISSIONARY COLLEGE IN CHINA.

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FROM the earliest days of the Church, education has been an important agent in the propagation of Christianity. During the Middle Ages education was one of the chief instrumentalities by which Christianity was introduced among European nations. Rome has always availed herself of this power, both to extend her dominion and to regain lost ground. And if education has been an element of such importance in establishing Christianity in the West, have we any reason to believe that it will be a less powerful agent in establishing Christianity in the East? Not only so, but it seems to me that our endeavor to propagate the Christian religion *among* such a people as the Chinese (without it), would be most unwise, for among heathen nations there are few where literature is so identified with the national life. It is only necessary as a proof of this to refer to the vastness of their literature, and the profound respect that is accorded to the pursuit of learning and literary men. A "literary degree" is the "open sesame" to all avenues of distinction in China, and in that land above all others the influence of such an institution as the one proposed could hardly fail to produce results exceeding, perhaps, our most sanguine expectations.

Again, the better one is acquainted with the state of things in China, and the more one studies the Chinese people with an heartfelt desire for their speedy conversion to Chris-



tianity, the more strongly one is convinced that the most effective agency that can be employed in carrying on the great work of evangelizing that nation must be thoroughly trained native ministers, who shall go forth to proclaim the gospel with a might and power which only a native ministry can possess. A college such as the one proposed would be undoubtedly the most efficient means of attracting Chinese young men from all parts of the Empire, and bringing them under the influences of our Christian religion and Christian civilization.

And from these young men, with God's blessing, we might look for constant accessions to the ranks of a native ministry, and for hearty and efficient co-workers in carrying on the work of the Church in China.

Having thus briefly stated the pressing need of a Missionary College in China, and having indicated the importance of such an institution in carrying on our missionary work there, it remains to be considered whether the establishment of such a college as the one proposed is a practical undertaking. Certainly so, if the Church can only be aroused to the importance of the enterprise and provide the means to carry it out. China, long hermetically sealed from intercourse with Christian nations, is now thrown open to missionary enterprise, and there is nothing to hinder the establishment of such a college in any part of China where missionaries have found free scope for carrying on their work.

To begin this institution I have appealed to the church for a sum of money not less than one hundred thousand dollars. In the city of Philadelphia and elsewhere I have obtained promises for an amount equal to about one-third of that sum, and I pray that God may put it into the hearts of our church people to complete the desired amount wherewith to commence the proposed institution, the need and value of which I have very imperfectly placed before them.

That our church may be willing to give to China a Missionary College as an enduring testimony of our love to our Lord and Master is my earnest prayer.

I propose that the remainder of the sum needed to begin this undertaking, *i. e.*, seventy thousand dollars, shall be divided into one hundred and forty shares, each share amounting to five hundred dollars, these shares to be taken up, one or more, according to the ability of individuals and churches. I would not ask for the immediate payment of these sums ; but simply that the promise should be given now, and the amount paid at the end of say three or four years, the interest to be given yearly until the whole is paid. Any sums raised towards the establishing of the proposed Missionary College will be invested in this country, and the interest only used in carrying on the work in China.

SAMUEL I. J. SCHERESCHEWSKY.

PHILADELPHIA, March 17, 1877.



The following correspondence between the Bishops of Pennsylvania and New York amply sustains this appeal and enforces it with such reasons as must commend the project to the Church at large :—

PHILADELPHIA, March 5, 1877.

MY DEAR BISHOP POTTER:

The more I think over the plan of the Rev. Dr. Schereschewsky to establish a Central Mission College in China, the more I am impressed with its wisdom and importance.

While it is the aim of Christian missions to attack paganism and superstition on all sides, it is especially our duty to do so on *that* side and through *that* avenue which will best reach the heart and mind of the nation which we seek to convert.

The Chinese, though "heathen" when looked at from a Christian standpoint, are yet a highly civilized people. They have a government, literature, laws, arts, local usages, indicating a people far removed from a barbarous state. They were the first to discover the use of the compass; the arts of paper-making and printing; the manufacture of gunpowder; the prophylactic virtue of inoculation; and many other things which are among the most potent agents in material progress and national greatness.

They have all the elements of modern civilization except the one important factor of Christianity.

Their several religions, however philosophical they may be in some of their aspects, are but masked forms of idolatry and pantheism, and culminate, in the popular mind, in the generally accepted "worship of ancestors," which has been called "the real religion of China."

Their morality, though in many respects outwardly decorous, is the morality of a people without either the stimulant or the restraints of God's Holy Word.

Buddhism and Taonism and Confucianism, the three religious sects of the Chinese, are interwoven throughout with false history, false science, false geography, false chronology, false philosophy, yet all these falsities alleging some

divine basis ; thus making a false theology uphold a defective education, and a defective education upholds a false religion.

Modern science and literature, by teaching a true history, chronology, geography, philosophy, etc., will necessarily displace the false, and this removed, the superincumbent mass of error, in the shape of their now boasted religions, will of necessity topple and fall.

The truth of this is already manifest in the results which have followed the establishing of the Hindu Colleges in India. There, as the process of enlightenment advances, the hold on ancestral faith and old idolatries and hereditary traditions is relaxed, and the educated mind turns away from systems honeycombed with error and propped up only by popular delusions.

But this work of breaking down the old systems of religion, grounded on ignorance, can only be done by setting forth true knowledge, and causing true science to supplant the false.

The ordinary mission work does not do this. Its sphere is different. Its line of action is principally spiritual indoctrination of the mind by teaching and preaching the gospel. But in order to capture such strongholds of heathenism, there must be *sapping and mining processes* set to work, as well as direct personal assaults in the mission field. In a land so interpenetrated and overspread with systems which take on the aspect of high and time-hallowed philosophies, these philosophies themselves must be first undermined and the rubbish be cleared away before the ground can be prepared for laying, deep and firm, the foundations of the Christian faith. To do this quietly, effectively, scientifically, will be the special work of this Mission College in China.

The superior mental culture it will give in all branches of learning, the blending of this knowledge with high moral culture, and the sending out from the walls of such a college well-trained native Chinese as teachers, scientists, scholars, and clergymen, will be one of the most powerful of the mission agencies in the Celestial Empire.



Already, with the limited means at command, and mostly under the training of two or three missionaries, a Divinity School called "Duane Hall" has been inaugurated in Shanghai, with its president, professors, and scholarships, and it has already ten Chinese teachers and divinity students and thirty-five scholars. There are at present fourteen candidates for Holy Orders in China,—a number which is truly wonderful in proportion to the number of ordained missionaries (ten) there, and which, if equalled by a similar proportion of candidates to pastors in this country, would give us thousands of candidates where we now barely number hundreds.

It is utterly useless to expect to supply the demand for laborers in China by *exporting missionaries* to China, waiting the tedious process of their learning the language or proving themselves fit for the work assigned them, and thus wasting a large percentage of time and money and talent which might be better utilized in the home field. The Church in China can only *naturalize* itself in China through a *native* ministry. It must prove itself to be a living Church, by taking hold of the living masses on the soil and subsidizing them for the house of the Lord. It is the native pastorates which will make effective and national the native Church; and it is from the native Church that the pastorate, ay, and the episcopate, must before long draw its living supplies. What Bishop Cotton of Calcutta so well said some years ago in reference to India, is fully applicable to China. "I hope," said the lamented bishop, "that we English bishops are only the foreign Augustines and Theodoretts, to be followed, we trust, by a goodly succession of native Stigands and Langtons." This must be the vocation of the bishop and clergy whom we send to China. They must plant such an institution there as will draw to it Chinese youth; as will make it a nursery of sound education and pure religion; as will secure a stronghold on the popular mind; as will by it supply its own teachers, secular and religious; as will make it the mighty, but almost noiseless, "Corliss engine" of our work there, that, by means of far-reaching agencies, shall propel its central force all over the



empire, and make the whole widespread and varied appliances of mission work instinct with the life and throbs of its great motive power.

The pre-eminence everywhere in China accorded to literature, the universal respect paid to the scholar, and the fact that the "literary class" is the ruling class, seem to make it imperative that there should be founded there an educating institution of the highest kind, — an institution that will turn out men versed in Chinese classics, Western science, and the Christian religion, who, upon their own soil, amidst their own homes, in their own dress, and under their own civil and judicial institutions, shall not only preach the gospel and establish schools and found churches, but also prepare, what does not now exist in China, a theological and ecclesiastical literature in the Mandarin language, to be put into the hands of the candidates for Holy Orders, so that they may become "well learned" as well as "godly" men.

Perhaps no step will do more to lift up the whole idea of our mission work in the minds and respect of that nation than the establishment of such a college. It will be the standing, ever-present evidence of disinterested zeal and Christian philanthropy. It will compel the respect of the most influential classes; it will mould hundreds of young Chinese minds; it will open fields of usefulness now closed; and will, as I have said before, be a centre of mission work, a hundred-fold more productive, both of temporal and spiritual results, than can possibly be secured by the present unorganized and congregational efforts, valuable and blessed as these efforts have been.

In a word, that scheme which does most to fit the Chinese themselves to become true missionaries of the Lord Jesus is the most pressing need now for China, and is the true missionary work for our Church to undertake and accomplish.

I write these few thoughts, my dear Bishop, as the result of much consideration of the whole subject, and I send them to you because you are the honored chairman of the Foreign Committee having charge of this mission, and because you

feel yourself such a deep interest in and sympathy with the great work to be done in that distant yet most interesting field.

I remain, with great respect,

Your friend and brother in Christ, .

WILLIAM BACON STEVENS.

RIGHT REV. H. POTTER, D.D., D.C.L., Bishop of New York.



NEW YORK, March 14, 1877.

MY DEAR BISHOP STEVENS :

I beg to thank you very heartily for your kindness in sending to me some thoughts on the importance of establishing in China a Mission College for the education and training of native Christians for the work of the sacred ministry in that country. Your views are every way worthy of most serious consideration. I am so thankful that you have taken hold of this, as I esteem it to be, vital subject.

Before receiving your paper I had put together a few observations in furtherance of the same cause. I venture to send them to you in their original shape, for the purpose of showing that two persons deeply interested in the work of Foreign Missions had reached the same general conclusions.

"The Missionary Bishop elect of China, after a residence of more than fifteen years in that country, for most of the time in Peking, after having translated the Holy Scriptures into that language and after having observed the mission work among that people, having himself a remarkable power of mastering languages, has come to a settled conviction that if effective mission work on a great scale is to be done in China, it must be chiefly by a native ministry.

"Some of the brightest and most earnest of the native Christian converts must be taken into a suitable institution and carefully prepared for ministerial work, and ordained on the spot. Already they have had experience enough with native ministers to be warranted in holding that opinion.

"Singularly enough the late Bishop Patteson of Melanesia, after more than ten years' work in the Melanesian Islands, having also wonderful power of dealing with languages and with the people of those islands, had before his death (murdered while in the discharge of his duty) come decidedly to the same conclusion. In Melanesia it was less difficult to obtain ordained ministers from England than it is to obtain them in China from this country. But Bishop Patteson saw clearly that if he was to do his work effectively, he must look to a native ministry, and he took his measures accordingly



for educating promising natives in the islands, and he had before his death ordained several natives, who proved faithful and efficient in their work.

"Here are two very remarkable men, having no communication with each other, reaching from their own observation and experience the same conclusion. Can we disregard it?"

"The Bishop elect of China is very strongly of the opinion that to do any great Christian work in China, a work that will root and propagate itself in the country, the Church must have in Peking a Mission College, in which native Christians can be trained and educated for the ministry. Without such an institution he thinks it would be better for him to return to China as a Presbyterian and again devote himself to the work of translation, preparing elementary works for theological instruction in the Chinese language. But what a pity that a great opportunity should be lost of doing a great work!"

It is believed that \$100,000 (the capital to be left in this country) would be sufficient for the support of three professors, and for other purposes connected with the college. One third of that sum has been already promised to the Bishop elect. Will not a few persons of wealth unite to contribute the remaining sum?

"I know of no other purpose to which the same sum of money could be applied with equal prospect of great and permanent usefulness."

I am, my dear Bishop,

With great regard, most truly yours,

HORATIO POTTER.

The Rev. WM. BACON STEVENS, D.D., Bishop of Penn.

N. B. — Contributions may be sent to Mr. Lemuel Coffin, 220 Chestnut Street, or to Mr. James M. Brown, Treasurer of the Foreign Committee, 23 Bible House, New York, and will be gratefully acknowledged through the Church Press.